

## Finis Cowan, Jr.

OF COUNSEL (IN MEMORIAM)



### Credentials

- University of Texas School of Law  
LL.B., *with honors*  
Order of the Coif
- Rice University  
B.A., *with highest honors*  
Phi Beta Kappa; Phi Delta Phi
- U.S. District Judge for  
Southern District of Texas, Galveston Division,  
1977-1979
- Admitted to Practice:  
Texas

**Finis Cowan Jr. passed away at the age of 94. A stalwart of the Texas legal community, Finis was a beacon of compassion, faith, drive, and professionalism. His legacy is etched in the hearts of his six children and the countless lawyers he influenced throughout his illustrious career.**

Born in Dallas, Texas, Finis proudly served as a Marine Corps Lieutenant during the Korean War, a testament to his courage and dedication. After earning his undergraduate from Rice University, he continued to law school, graduating in 1956 from The University of Texas School of Law, where he graduated Order of the Coif. He served with distinction at Baker & Botts in Houston. President Jimmy Carter nominated him to a seat on the Galveston Division of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas, a position he held from 1977 to 1979.

Finis was a man of unyielding integrity and unflagging work ethic, trying well over 100 jury trials against legendary Texas trial lawyers. His accolades speak volumes about his contributions to the legal field. Over his career, he received nearly every honor available to lawyers in our state, including induction into the American College of Trial Lawyers and the R.D. Secrest Outstanding Trial Lawyer Award, among the many distinctions so richly deserved.

Mr. Cowan's career has spanned almost fifty years, from a trial associate with Baker Botts LLP to a federal judge in the Southern District of Texas back to Baker Botts LLP as senior partner to a private practice focusing as arbitrator and mediator.

Some of his major accomplishments include the successful defense of plaintiffs in the Delaware Court of Chancery challenging alleged breaches of fiduciary duty to stockholders, the settlement of a construction contract dispute relating to design and construction of the South Texas Nuclear Facility (achieved the then highest settlement of a construction contract dispute in the U.S.), the successful defense against plaintiff cities seeking damages for breach of contract and right to rescind their contract to participate as owner in the South Texas Nuclear Facility; the successful representation of a former Texas Lt. Governor in a civil rights action which was argued before the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals and the U.S. Supreme Court, the successful defense of a billion-dollar case involving allegations of attempted monopolization of the airline industry, and the successful defense against claims for rescission of a contract to participate in River

Bend Nuclear Facility. In early 2004, he assisted in the successful defense of an antitrust case prosecuted by seventeen competitors against the leading national manufacturer/distributor of tortillas in the U.S., which was dismissed in trial by a directed verdict.

We were privileged to know and work with Finis. His legacy will continue to inspire us. May he rest in peace.

### **Professional Honors & Affiliations**

- R.D. Secrest Outstanding Trial Lawyer Award, 2005
- Lifetime Excellence in Advocacy Award, Texas Association of Certified Trial and Appellate Specialists, 2003
- The Best in the World, International Commercial Litigation, 1996
- Top Ten Trial Lawyers in the Country, National Law Journal, 1994
- Outstanding Fifty-Year Lawyer Award
- Member, State Bar of Texas
- Emeritus Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers
- President of Parish St. Vincent de Paul Conference
- Assistant Catholic Chaplain at the Harris County Jail from 1995-2003
- Member of the Board of Directors Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas from 1990-1996